

Badger Recorded

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
National Park Service
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OCCURRENCE OF A BADGER IN PICTURED ROCKS NATIONAL LAKESHORE, MICHIGAN 29 September 2004

Jerrold L. Belant, National Park Service, Pictured Rocks Science Center, Box 40, Munising, Michigan, USA
Joanne E. Wolford, National Park Service, Pictured Rocks Science Center, Box 40, Munising, Michigan, USA
Leah G. Kainulainen, National Park Service, Great Lakes Network, Box 40, Munising, Michigan, USA.

Abstract: A female North American badger (*Taxidea taxus*) was captured adjacent to Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (PRNL), Michigan, on 16 September 2004. Subsequent radiotelemetry relocations through 24 September confirmed the badger's presence within PRNL's Inland Buffer Zone, 3-4 km southeast of Beaver Lake. This represents the first verified record of a badger in PRNL.

North American badgers occur throughout the western United States and Great Plains of North America, with the geographic range extending east to central Ohio (Messick 1987, Whitaker and Hamilton 1998). In Michigan, badgers have been verified in all counties, including those in the Upper Peninsula (Baker 1983). However, badger presence has not been confirmed in PRNL, located in Alger County, northcentral Upper Peninsula.

On 16 September 2004, a badger was captured incidentally in a cage trap (Model 108, Tomahawk Live Trap Company, Tomahawk, Wisconsin, USA) during a study of American marten (*Martes americana*) (Fig. 1). The badger was immobilized using an intramuscular injection of Telazol® (Fort Dodge Animal Health, Fort Dodge, Iowa, USA) with basic physiology monitored as described by Belant (2004). The badger received a radio transmitter (Advanced Telemetry Systems, Isanti, Minnesota, USA); standard body metrics were taken. A tooth was not extracted for aging; however, measurements including body length (64 cm), total length (76 cm), skull length (12.0 cm), skull width (9.0 cm), and estimated weight (6 kg) suggested that this individual was probably a yearling (Long 1973, Baker 1983, Messick 1987). Teeth were not damaged and evidence of staining was not observed. Nipple size (<2mm length or width) and coloration suggested this badger has not produced young.



Six radio telemetry locations were obtained through 27 September 2004 (Fig. 2). The badger occupied an area within and adjacent to PRNL's Inland Buffer Zone, 3-4 km southeast of Beaver Lake. Mean daily movements were 1.7 ± 1.0 km (SD). Little comparative data is available; however, badgers have reportedly traveled up to 14 km in 4 hr (Hoodicoff 2002). Female and males have dispersed up to 64 and 118 km, respectively (Messick 1987).

Although this is the first verified record of a North American Badger at PRNL, badgers have probably occupied areas within PRNL previously. Badgers have been reported in Alger County south of PRNL on the adjacent Hiawatha National Forest (K. Doran, Hiawatha National Forest, personal communication). Additional surveys to document badger distribution and abundance within PRNL and adjacent areas are warranted.

Literature Cited

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